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Weekly Review

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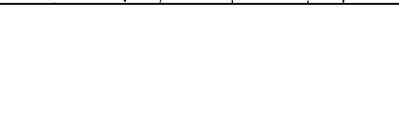
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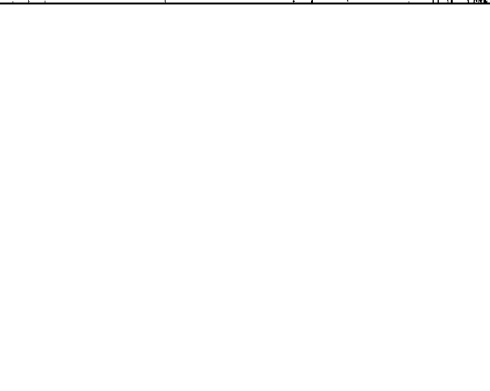


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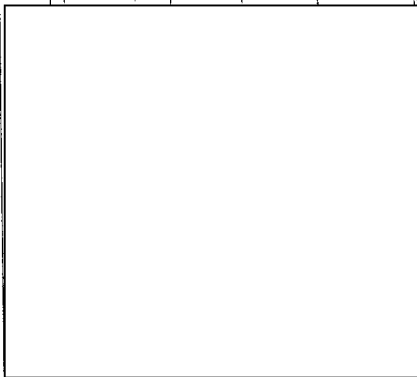
9 South Korea: Advanced Weapons

**MIDDLE EAST
AFRICA**



EUROPE

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HEMISPHERE**



INTERNATIONAL

**SPECIAL
REPORT**



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President Pak

SOUTH KOREA: ADVANCED WEAPONS

President Pak has said privately that he has ordered South Korean scientists to proceed with a program to develop "atom bombs," rockets, and other modern weapons by 1977. Funds to lay the groundwork for Seoul's eventual production of such weapons reportedly have already been included in the defense budget for next year, which will be presented to the legislature in October.

Despite Pak's apparent strong personal commitment and South Korea's current nuclear research program, Seoul is not likely to be able to develop a nuclear device before 1980 at the earliest. The country's two research reactors—which are not capable of producing enough plutonium for a significant weapons development program—are under international safeguards, as are

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two enriched-uranium power reactors now under construction. South Korea is also entirely dependent on foreign sources for reactor fuel and has neither uranium processing nor chemical separation facilities. Seoul is seeking technology in Europe and Japan, however, with an eye toward constructing a chemical separation plant, and it is also negotiating with Canada to purchase two natural uranium reactors better suited for plutonium production.

tic policies have come under considerable criticism in the US Congress and press.

South Korea has previously evidenced its desire to establish a credible independent military stance, and it appears highly unlikely that Seoul will soon ratify the Non-Proliferation Treaty. A recent editorial in a newspaper influenced by the South Korean intelligence agency stressed that Seoul could no longer accept the view that humanitarian and sentimental concerns preclude the spread of nuclear weapons. [REDACTED]

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One of the options under consideration by the Koreans is to secretly divert fissionable wastes from a power reactor. Although this might be accomplished by violating international safeguards, South Korean scientists would still face considerable difficulties in fashioning and producing nuclear weapons.

President Pak reportedly also expressed a desire to produce missiles with a range of about 270 nautical miles. A member of Seoul's Agency for Defense Development is currently in the US learning how to set up a missile range and determining equipment requirements and costs. The Korean official hoped to have a test range operational by mid-1975, but admitted that this date was not realistic.

Pak's desire for advanced weapons appears to be part of an overall effort to develop military strength in the event US forces leave Korea. He is signaling—and may have intended his remarks to reach US officials—an ability and desire to assert Korea's military independence from the US and implying that Seoul will be able to stand alone against the North in the foreseeable future.

Pak's statements could also be intended to spur the US into providing additional conventional weapons in return for Seoul's promise not to develop nuclear weapons. Pak might also hope that such an agreement would have the additional benefit of extracting a restatement of US guarantees to defend Korea at a time when Pak's domes-

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